

PANASCAL 1998 VINTAGE PORT



Background Information

Quinta do Panascal is a substantial Grade A property located in the heart of the Tavora valley, in the Cima Corgo region of the Douro. The Quinta undertook an ambitious planting programme from 1987-1995 and is now one of the largest Quintas in the Douro valley, producing top quality port.

A Quinta do Panascal Vintage port is produced only when a general Fonseca declaration is not made, as this wine forms the backbone of a Fonseca Vintage port blend. The decision to bottle a Quinta do Panascal vintage is taken when the wine is judged to be of exceptional quality. Like a Fonseca vintage port the wine spends two years ageing in wooden casks before being bottled. However, the wine is not released immediately after it is bottled but left to mature in Fonseca's cellars in Vila Nova de Gaia until it is ready for drinking; normally ten years after the harvest.

Notes on Viticultural Year and Harvest

The 1998 growing season started extremely wet. The water table was replenished but this in turn caused extensive erosion problems, particularly in old terraced vineyards. A cold spring followed with temperatures just above freezing mid April. With May came a burst of warmth. A dry, hot summer, with temperatures exceeding 40 ° C during the first two weeks of August, was followed by daily showers during the harvest which began on 20th September.

The almost perfect growing season caused great excitement in the Douro until picking began. The rain during the harvest caused dilution of the fermenting musts and a corresponding reduction in the power of the final wines. Hopes were dampened and the overall yield turned out to be the lowest of the decade.

Press Comments

Wine International, January 2005

"Big and spicy on the nose with great peppery fruit, length and balance. A maturing wine with good spicy notes of cinnamon and all spice and dark fruit."

Tasting Notes

Deep purple, with a delicate, perfumed berry nose. Medium to full bodied with good intense fruit flavours. A very well structured wine with a delicious long chocolaty finish.

Storage / Handling

The ideal storage conditions are up to 16° Celsius and most importantly at a constant temperature. The bottle should rest on its side, thus keeping the cork moist and therefore an effective seal. When coming to decant the wine, stand the bottle upright 24 hours before drinking to allow the collected sediment to fall to the bottom of the bottle. After uncorking the wine, you must pour in a slow, steady stream into your decanter, carefully watching the emerging liquid to ensure that only the clear wine is poured, leaving the sediment behind.

Serving Suggestions

Walnuts are an excellent accompaniment to Vintage Port, as are various cheeses such as Stilton and Dorset Blue Vinny. So too are dried fruits such as apricots or figs. Alternatively, simply savour the unadulterated taste in a good glass with good company.

